

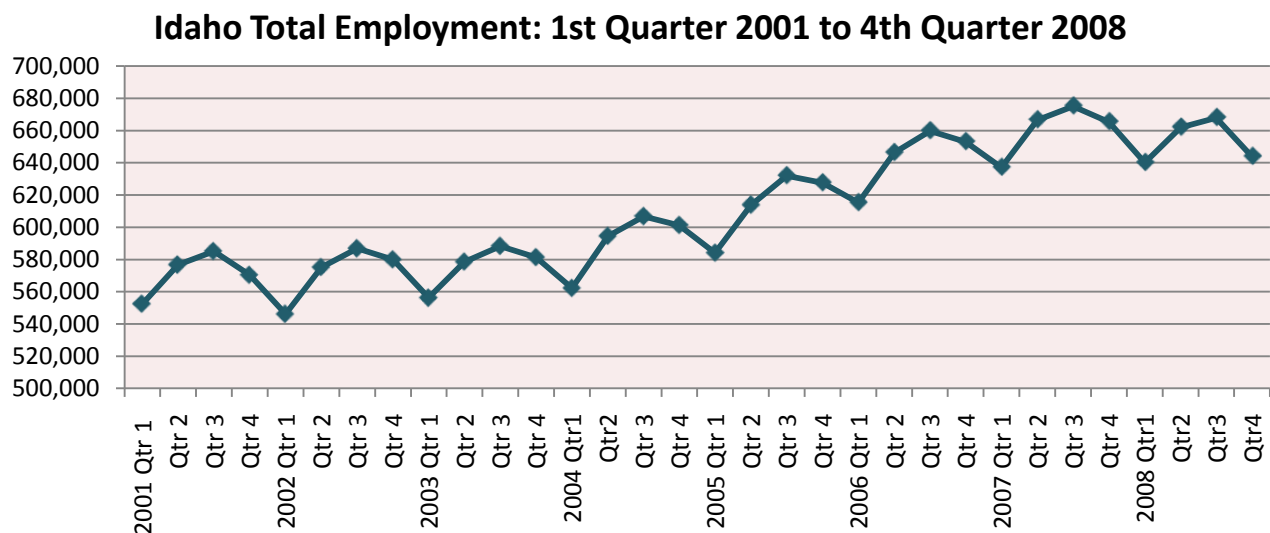
## IDAHO

### Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2008

### Employment

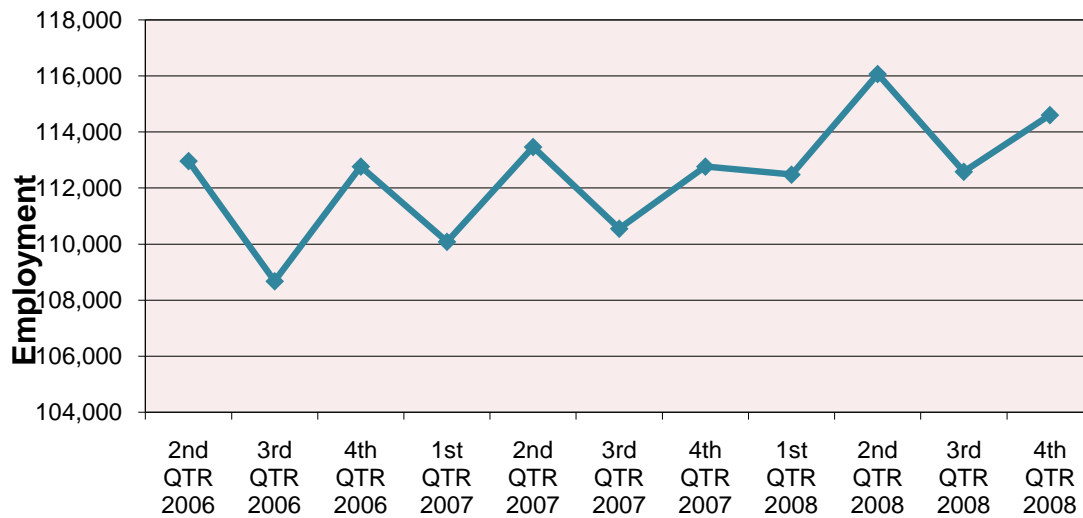
For the first time in over a decade, Idaho saw jobs decline from the third to the fourth quarter of 2008 as the national recession repressed holiday spending and left merchants with little need for addition staff. Covered employment reported through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages totaled 643,854 in the October-December quarter, down from 667,875 in the third quarter. The fourth quarter total was also 21,434 below the fourth quarter of 2007. The dramatic decline brought job levels back to where they were in first quarter of 2008. All but a handful of industries felt the declines, and the others saw typically modest gains. The largest was nearly 5,500 in public schools, reflecting the resumption of schools in the fall.



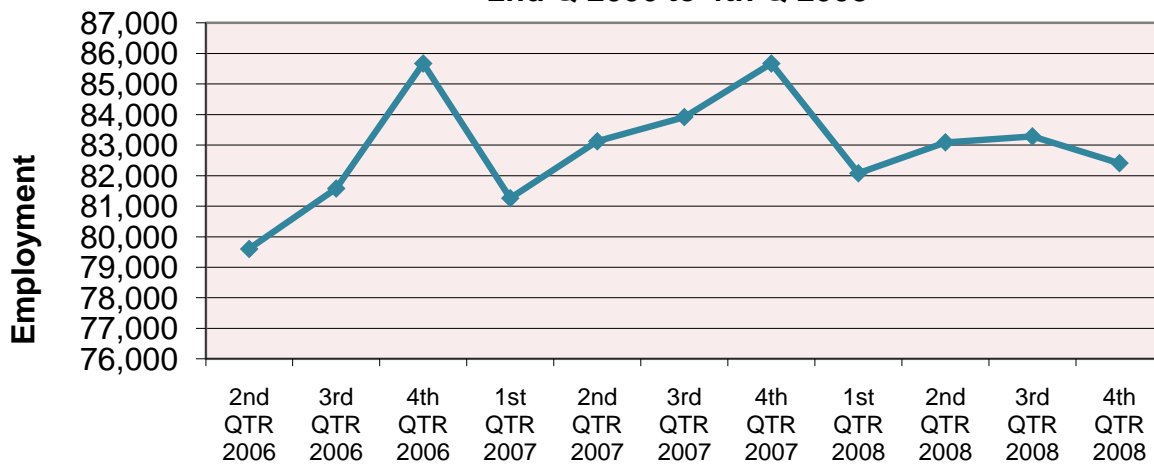
Private-sector jobs totaled 529,249 in the fourth quarter, down 20,373, or 3.7 percent, from the third quarter but 22,503, or 4.08 percent, below the year-earlier level. Limited seasonal hiring in some sectors was eclipsed by job losses in others. Government, including education, averaged 114,602 jobs in the fourth quarter, up by 2,020, or 1.8 percent, from the third. That reflects the normal third to fourth quarter increase for government employment with the beginning of school in the fall. *See figure 1.*

Rather than the marked gain expected in retail trade from third to fourth quarters, the industry instead lost 876 jobs, or 1.1 percent, and employment in fourth quarter was 3,259, or 3.8 percent, lower than fourth quarter of 2007. This continued retail's weak performance throughout 2008. Motor vehicle and parts dealers and building material and garden supply stores – the third quarter's biggest losers – continued the losing streak, shedding 905 jobs in autos and parts and 816 jobs building and garden supplies. As in third quarter, losses in these sectors were offset by gains in others. Clothing stores picked up 273 jobs and general merchandise added 700. Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores and nonstore retailers also saw moderate gains of 150 to 170. *See figure 2.*

**Figure 1. Public Administration Employment:  
2nd Q 2006 to 4th Q 2008**

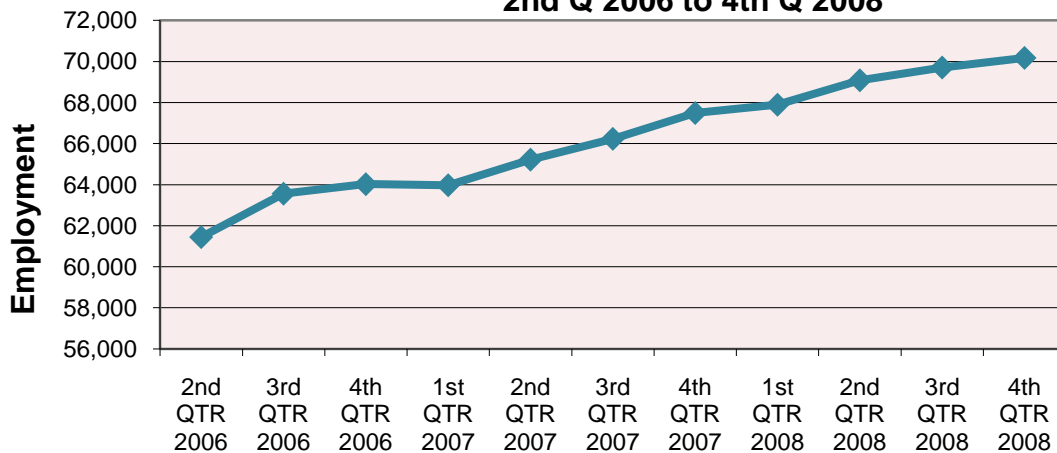


**Figure 2. Retail Trade Employment:  
2nd Q 2006 to 4th Q 2008**



Health care employment continued to flatten out in fourth quarter, rising just 0.7 percent, or 468 jobs from the third quarter. This was even lower than the 0.9 percent growth of third quarter. Nursing and residential care facilities added 222 jobs and hospitals another 286. Social assistance lost 156 jobs while ambulatory care gained 116. The net result was both slipped back to second quarter employment levels. See *figure 3*.

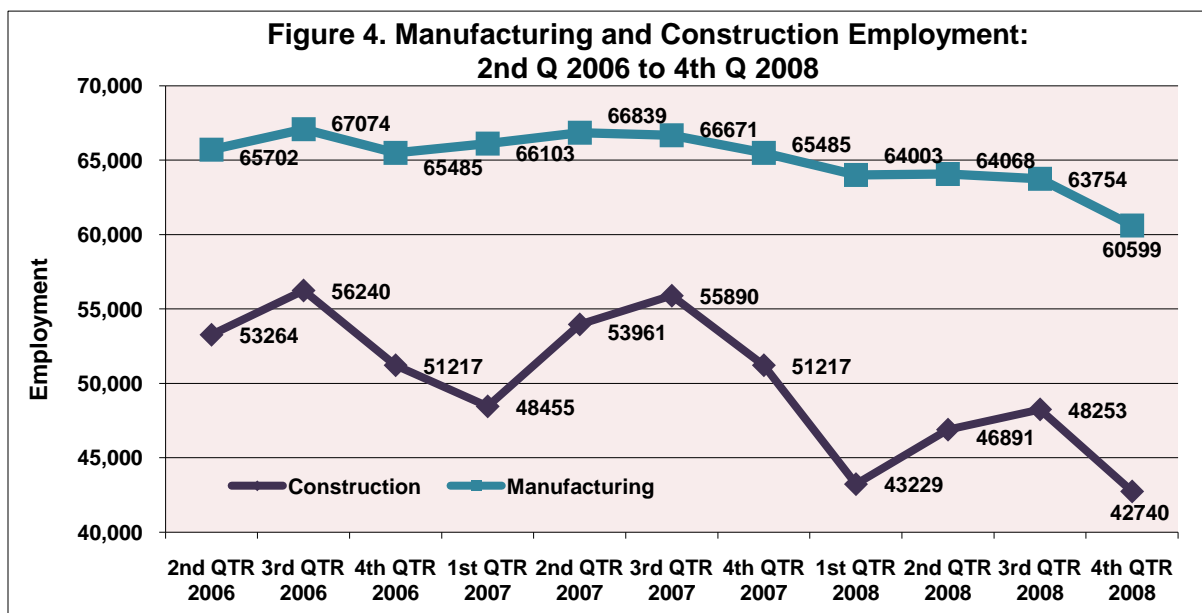
**Figure 3. Health Care and Social Assistance Employment:  
2nd Q 2006 to 4th Q 2008**



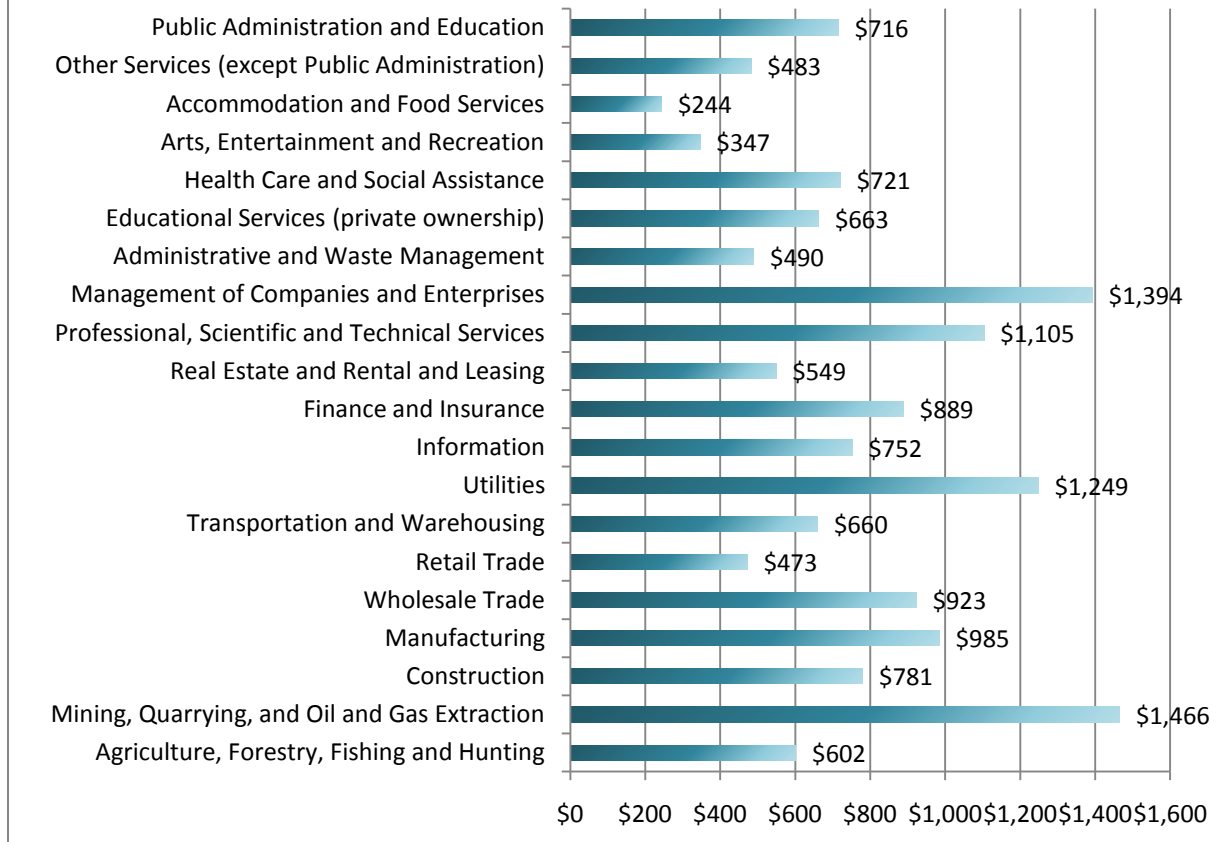
Construction continued its struggle, dropping another 5,513 jobs, or 11.4 percent. The loss was in excess of the expected seasonal decline in construction employment and greater than 2007's third-to-fourth quarter loss of 8.4 percent. Employment levels in fourth quarter 2008 were 8,477, or 16.6 percent, lower than they were at the end of 2007. All sectors lost. Heavy and civil engineering dropped 1,166 jobs and construction of buildings lost 1,000. Specialty trade contractors cut payrolls by another 3,347 jobs between third and fourth quarter 2008 and 5,266 jobs from one year earlier, remaining the hardest hit component of the construction sector. *See figure 4.*

Manufacturing continued its job loss begun in third quarter, losing a total of 3,154 in fourth quarter and bringing employments down to 4,886, or 7.5 percent, less than in fourth quarter 2007. Durable goods suffered heavier losses than nondurable goods, 2,978 or 7.7 percent versus 176 or .7 percent, bringing the total loss in durable goods since last year up to 5,168. The sectors which lost the most jobs were wood product manufacturing at 1,069, computer and electronic product manufacture at 1,007, and transportation equipment manufacture at 446. *See figure 4.*

**Figure 4. Manufacturing and Construction Employment:  
2nd Q 2006 to 4th Q 2008**



**Figure 5. Idaho Weekly Average Wage by Industry  
Fourth Quarter 2008**



## Wages

During the fourth quarter of 2008, Idaho's average weekly wage for all industries was \$693, up \$50 from the previous quarter. The lowest wages were reported in accommodations and food services at \$244, a \$6 decrease from the third quarter, and leisure activities at \$347, a \$16 increase. Company management recorded the highest wage at \$1,394 a week, unchanged from the previous quarter. Mining followed at \$1,466, up \$473 from the third quarter and the largest increase of any industry. Utilities came in at \$1,249, up \$70 from the third quarter, and professional, scientific and technical services hit \$1,105, a \$133 increase. *See figure 5.*

\*This article also appears in the October 2009 issue of Idaho Employment Newsletter. Click [HERE](#) to read the newsletter.

**Karen Jarboe Singletary, Research Analyst**  
(208) 332-3570, ext. 3215  
[karen.jarboesingletary@labor.idaho.gov](mailto:karen.jarboesingletary@labor.idaho.gov)